



TO: Chief Elected Officials
Steering Committee

FROM: Craig E. Hartzer
Commissioner

DATE: February 7, 2000

SUBJ: DWD Communication 1998-60
Change 1: Assessment and Case Management
Processes Policy

RE: Workforce Investment Act

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Purpose

To provide State policy concerning participant assessment and case management processes for adults, dislocated workers, and youth served with Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding.

Rescission

DWD Communication 98-16, effective November 12 1998.

Content

Local administrators are instructed to develop a local assessment and case management policy for adults, dislocated workers, and youth based on the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) legislation and regulations and the following State guidance. **State policy is indicated in bold print:**

Assessment Process

1. Adults and Dislocated Workers

WIA provides for three levels of services for adults and dislocated workers: core, intensive, and training, with service at one level being a prerequisite to moving to the next level. Neither the Department of Labor or DWD requires a minimum time period in one level of service before moving on to the next level. Instead, DOL allows localities to establish gateway activities that lead from participation in core to intensive and training services. A gateway activity is one in which the client, when having successfully completed an activity, can "open the gate to" or enter into the next activity. Any core service, such as an initial assessment could be the gateway activity to intensive services. In intensive services, the gateway activity to training services could be the development of an individual employment plan. Key to these gateway activities is the determination made at the local level, that intensive or training services are required for the participant to achieve the goal of obtaining or retaining self-sufficient employment. **Local policy needs to identify gateway activities and describe the circumstances for when specific gateway activities will be used.**

The interim final regulations at 20 CFR Part 663.160 indicate that each adult or dislocated worker must receive at least one core service, such as an initial assessment, before receiving intensive services. **To receive intensive services, DWD policy requires each adult or dislocated worker receive, at a minimum, an initial assessment. (Also to receive intensive services, the participant must meet locally required criteria that defines “unable to obtain or retain employment.”) The decision to provide additional core services may be made on a case-by-case basis at the local level depending on the needs of the participant. The initial assessment that results in a determination of a need for intensive services will be documented in the participant’s file. Initial assessment includes collecting all information needed to determine whether someone is appropriate for WIA, as well as whether they meet the priority rankings. Remember that determining eligibility for WIA is a “core” (universal, non-registered) service.** Additionally, follow up services must be available for a minimum of 12 months after employment begins, to adult or dislocated workers who are placed in unsubsidized employment.

Section 134(d)(3)(C) indicates that intensive services for adults and dislocated workers may include a comprehensive and specialized assessment of their skill levels and service needs. Such an assessment may include diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools and in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals. As a reminder, after moving to intensive services, the participant may continue to receive core services.

Assessment is an on-going activity that continues throughout a participant's relationship with the service provider. For all adult and dislocated worker participants, DWD requires assessments be completely individualized by tailoring it to the client's individual skill level and expressed career interest, and be in compliance with all applicable WIA legislation. Also, local administrators may administer a core set of assessments and select additional instruments and activities based on individual circumstances. Local assessment strategies should be comprehensive and linked to service delivery. Local administrators may select appropriate areas to be assessed and strategies to complete such assessments. The local policy may allow that specific areas are assessed and strategies to complete such assessments are developed that are based on the strengths and interests of individual adults and dislocated workers.

Local policy must contain the specific criteria that will be used in determining adults' and dislocated workers' need for intensive and training services. The policy must include:

- a) The WIB’s criteria for determining whether intensive and training funds are limited and the priority for accessing. (Sections 134(d)(4)(E) and 134(d)(4)(A) of WIA; 20 CFR Parts 663.310 and 663.600; and page 3 of the One-Stop System Design Basic Principles.)**

- b) **The criteria for determining whether employment leads to self- sufficiency. (Section 134(d)(3)(A) of WIA; 20 CFR Parts 663.220 and 663.230; and page 5 of the One-Stop System Design Basic Principles.)**

Additionally, local policy must outline the conditions for accepting non-WIA assessments. Non-WIA assessments that have been completed within one year of application for services and that meet the requirements of State policy may be used.

2. Youth

Section 129© of the Act identifies the features of youth program design under WIA. While there are three program design categories and ten program elements, there is individual program design flexibility and flexibility in determining the definition, scope, and characteristics of the elements. Local program operators will determine what program elements will be provided to each youth participant based on the participant's objective assessment and service strategy. However, DWD anticipates that each youth will participate in more than one of the ten elements required as part of any local youth program. In addition, all youth participants must receive at least 12 months of follow-up services following program completion.

The first program category is that all youth participants must receive an objective assessment. An objective assessment identifies the academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of the participant. Also, the objective assessment includes a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes (including interests and aptitudes for nontraditional jobs), supportive services needs, and developmental needs of each youth participant. A new assessment is not required if the assessment meets all the requirements contained in this policy **and has been completed within the past year.**

As with adults and dislocated workers, DWD considers objective assessment to be an on-going activity that continues throughout a youth participant's relationship with the service provider. For all youth participants, DWD requires assessment be individualized by tailoring it to the client's individual skill level and expressed career interest, and be in compliance with all applicable WIA legislation. Also, local administrators may administer a core set of assessments and select additional instruments and activities based on individual circumstances. Local assessment strategies should be comprehensive and linked to service delivery. Local administrators may select appropriate areas to be assessed and strategies to complete such assessments. The local policy may allow that specific areas are assessed and strategies to complete such assessments are developed that are based on the strengths and interests of individual youth.

Local policy must be developed that describes the objective assessment process that will be provided to each youth participant.

Case Management Process

1. Adults and Dislocated Workers

Case management is the provision of a client-centered approach to the delivery of services. It is designed to prepare and coordinate comprehensive employment plans, such as service strategies, for participants to ensure access to necessary workforce investment activities and supportive services. Local staff providing case management services use, where feasible, computer-based technologies; and provides job and career counseling during program participation and after job placement.

Each adult or dislocated worker in intensive services must have a case management file, either as a hard copy, electronic, or both. The rationale for determining the need for intensive services, as established by the initial assessment or the individual's inability to obtain employment through the core services provided, must be contained in the participant's case file. Also, the case file must contain the rationale for determining need for training services, as identified in the individual employment plan, comprehensive assessment, or through any other intensive service received. As a reminder, after moving to training services, the participant may continue to receive core services. **DWD policy requires that adults and dislocated workers who plan to select a training provider from the Statewide eligible training provider list must first receive assessment, counseling, and have an individual employment plan developed.**

20 CFR Part 663.220 of the Interim Regulations specify that at a minimum, an adult or dislocated worker must receive at least one intensive service, such as development of an individual employment plan with a staff person, before they may receive training services.

The employment plan is one component within the participant's case file. The individual employment plan is an ongoing strategy jointly developed (written) by the adult and dislocated worker and the staff person that identifies the participant's employment goals, the appropriate achievement objectives, and the appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals. **The specific items to be included in the employment plan must be based on the circumstances, plans, and desired outcomes for adults and dislocated workers. Local policies should provide for the review and updating of employment plans for adults and dislocated workers.**

2. Youth

The second category for youth program design is the development of a service strategy for each youth participant. The service strategy will identify an employment goal (including, in appropriate circumstances, nontraditional employment,) appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the participant taking into account the objective assessment. A new service strategy for a youth is not required if staff determines another service strategy developed for the youth participant under another education or training

program is appropriate **and has been developed within the past year.**

Local policy must be developed which describes the components to be contained in the individual service strategy developed for each youth participant. The specific items to be included in the service strategy must be based on the circumstances, plans, and desired outcomes for youth. Local policies should provide for the review and updating of service strategies for youth.

Questions concerning the assessment and case management processes may be addressed to Jennifer Biddle, Planning Analyst, at 317/232-7459.

Effective Date

July 1, 1999 for dislocated workers. (July 1, 2000 for the revisions contained in this policy.)
July 2, 1999 for adults. (July 1, 2000 for the revisions contained in this policy.)
April 1, 2000 for youth.

Ending Date

June 30, 2004.

Action

Local administrators must develop policies consistent with this State policy.